

APPROVED AS AMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

**TOWN OF DARIEN
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 15, 2004**

ATTENDANCE: Evonne Klein, First Selectwoman; Robert F. Harrel, Jr.;
Dr. Joseph Miceli; Linda Santarella; Barbara Thorne

STAFF: John Crary, Administrative Officer; Jeremy Ginsberg, Planning
Director

PUBLIC SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Klein called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

STAFF PRESENTATION – Proposed Acquisition of the Procaccini Property

Ms. Klein announced that this was an exciting opportunity to purchase the Procaccini property. She said that together the members of the community and the government could determine how to best make it suit the needs of the town. The first question is whether or not the residents want to purchase this property. Ms. Klein said that she stands behind purchasing the property.

Ms. Klein described the proposed purchase agreement and the reasons for wanting to purchase the property. She noted that Darien is 97% developed. This information about the property and its proposed use is being provided to the Board and the public for their information and input. Another public information meeting will be held on December 2, 2004 at 7:30 p.m.

Ms. Klein introduced Mr. Jeremy Ginsberg who presented a map of Darien. He described the characteristics of the property. He said that the property is located off of Hoyt Street and there are cemeteries on three sides of the property. The property has five acres of wetlands, including a small pond.

Mr. Crary presented plan #1 of the three proposed plans. He explained that the development of the property would take a number of years. The first part of the process is how the land can be used. The conceptual plan showed a playground, picnic area, multi-purpose field, skate park, basketball court, recreation facility and walking trails around the perimeters of the property.

Plan #2 was basically the same plan, but the biggest change was the addition of a paddle tennis court.

The third plan was again basically the same as the other two, but the biggest change here was to reconfigure the multi-purpose field.

Mr. Crary said that he was sure there would be changes to the plans when it goes before the Parks and Recreation Commission.

The presentation was finished and Ms. Klein asked for comments from Board members.

Dr. Miceli asked why the access off of Camp Avenue was mentioned. Mr. Crary replied that they would like to make use of that access. He said that it was a possibility, but a low probability. Mr. Miceli said that he would like to see the map, because he had been informed that it was not wide enough.

Ms. Klein reminded him, that these plans showed what could be done with the property. Mr. Ginsberg said that there needs to be more research.

Mr. Harrel said that while the three plans are basically the same, the parking requirements are different. He asked how many parking spaces would be required. Mr. Ginsberg said that would depend upon what use goes into the recreational facility. Planning and Zoning is working with Parks and Recreation to come up with that number.

Ms. Santarella thanked the staff for a job well done, but said that she was not satisfied with Mr. Ginsberg's answer about parking. Mr. Crary said that these are just conceptual plans. Ms. Santarella said that she understood that, but is concerned about parking. Mr. Ginsberg said that he would research this issue further.

Ms. Thorne said that it was very exciting to be this far along in negotiations for this last parcel of land and she does not want to see this opportunity missed. She said that she would like to see plans that show parking, but the first step is to make the commitment to buy the property.

Mr. Harrel asked about the ledge on the property. Mr. Ginsberg explained that they do not have a survey that actually maps the location at this time.

Ms. Klein said that the option is for the town to buy the property and develop for recreational use over time, rather than have a developer purchase the property where the town would have no control over development.

Ms. Klein said that she has looked at other properties, but each presented challenges. She said that she was grateful for the opportunity to purchase this property.

Ms. Klein invited the public to comment.

Ms. Candace Easton asked for an explanation of the land swap. Mr. Ginsberg explained how that would work. He added that the Procaccinis have lived in Darien for generations.

Mr. Paul Hendrickson, Hoyt Street, asked if the cemetery owners had been contacted. Attorney Wayne Fox said that they had been notified. One cemetery is active and the other is not. Based on conversations with representatives of both cemeteries, they would like more details.

Ms. Callie Sullivan asked if they could see a higher density of affordable property than was proposed by Avalon.

Mr. Ginsberg said that if the town does not buy the property a developer could build 12 – 15 single-family homes.

Mr. David Bayne, Windsor Road, asked if the town was locked into the purchase during this process. Attorney Fox said that it was not, and would have to enter into an agreement. He said that he believes there is a good faith willingness on the part of the Procaccini's to go forward with the purchase of the property by the town.

Mr. Callahan asked if the Procaccini's owned Wakemore Road. Ms. Klein said that they do.

Attorney Joe Rucci represented the Neafsy family. He said that they are concerned about the proposed use of the property. The burden of the outdoor, year-round activities would affect them and that is unacceptable. They are opposed to the use, but not to the purchase of the property.

Mr. Tad Neafsy said that the town needs to be careful about specifics before spending \$7.5 million. It needs to be done right.

Mr. Alan Banks said that there are a number of families on Wakemore Road who are concerned about traffic resulting from the property being developed.

Ms. Michell Joy asked if the residents on Wakemore Road would have a say in the sale of the property. Attorney Fox told her that the Procaccini's owned the property and the right to sell the property belongs to them

Mr. Mike Miller said that it would be ill advised to have school buses and traffic on Wakemore Road. He said that he was worried about his property value and the safety of children playing on the street.

Ms. Merrie Hawley urged the public to think about 110 units of affordable housing, each with 4 children per unit and how much it would cost the town. She asked the public to think twice about what the alternative could be.

Ms. Jill Colucci described the problems she has had with water on her property. She strongly stressed that whoever gets the property will need to add storm drains and a detention chamber in the wetlands. She said that twice this year they had 3 – 4 feet of water on the street. She said that the land was overworked and the water situation is horrendous.

Ms. Klein said that the Department of Public Works is aware of what is needed on the street.

Ms. Lynn Hamlen asked who the other interested parties were, and if one was an affordable housing developer. Attorney Fox said that the potential developers could include affordable housing.

Ms. Cheryl Russell asked if there was a separate price for the acres on the road. Ms. Klein said that it was all one lump sum. Ms. Russell suggested that the residents could approach the Procaccini family and offer to purchase the road.

Mr. Tad Neafsy said that the water issues and ledge issues need to be taken into consideration. He told the public not to be afraid of the alternative.

Mr. Chris Bulger spoke in support.

Mr. Brien Hines said that Wakemore Road is narrow and the houses are located close to the street. He said that it was not a good candidate.

Ms. Klein asked Mr. Ginsberg what the width of the street was. He said that it was 21 ft. wide. A typical public street is 24 ft. wide.

Ms. Suzanne Lorenzo said that Wakemore Road is narrow and there are water issues. She said that it was important that the town has land, but access from Wakemore Road was not possible.

Ms. Betty Simmons agreed that Wakemore Road is narrow and unsafe.

Ms. Klein said that this was an opportunity for the town to say yes or no to buying the property. She asked the residents to give the Board their comments and thanked them for attending the meeting.

1ST SELECTWOMAN'S R EPORT

Ms. Klein reviewed her written report. She said that the CL&P project has been postponed until January or February.

The Noroton Heights Train Station Pedestrian Overpass Concrete Floor Replacement Project will begin next spring. The Turtle Pond dredging application process has begun. She is working on the Main Street project. Dine Darien/Shop Darien weekend has been scheduled for the end of November. The tree lighting behind the Darien Sports Shop will take place on November 27th.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Mr. Crary gave his report and said that he had asked CL&P to do an audit of their streetlights and as a result found that they had been overbilling the town for 18 years. They offered a refund, which will be used for energy saving initiatives.

NEW BUSINESS

DISCUSS THE CREATION OF A SENIOR CENTER TASK FORCE

The Board agreed to create a Senior Center Task Force whose task will be to determine if the Center should be renovated or a new one built.

DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION ON LETTER FROM DHS STADIUM FIELD COMMITTEE TO RELEASE INTEREST EARNED ON DONATIONS MADE TO THE STADIUM FIELD FUND

- ** DR. MICELI MOVED TO RELEASE THE INTEREST EARNED ON DONATIONS MADE TO THE STADIUM FIELD FUND**
- ** MS. THORNE SECONDED**

Dr. Miceli said that he hopes they do not run into this situation in the future.

- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION ON PROPOSED GUIDELINES FROM THE MONUMENTS AND CEREMONIES COMMISSION FOR THE ERECTION OR INSTALLATION OF MONUMENTS, PLAQUES OR MEMORIALS

- ** MS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO DELAY THE ITEM**
- ** MS. THORNE SECONDED**

Ms. Santarella requested that the Board delay voting on this item. The Board suggested revisions to the guidelines. Ms. Thorne and Dr. Miceli will work on revisions.

- ** MOTION FAILED**

DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION ON GROVE STREET PARKING PLAN

Ms. Klein explained that the parking plan would take away commuter parking and 3 employee parking spaces for 5 Brook Street. She said that there is clearly a need for commuter parking, but not in the retail area.

Ms. Santarella said that last time she was opposed to the 3-hour limit, but after speaking to the merchants is in favor of the plan on a temporary basis.

- ** DR. MICELI MOVED TO APPROVE THE GROVE STREET PARKING PLAN**
- ** MS. THORNE SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

BUDGET TRANSFER FOR THE SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

- ** MS. SANTARELLA MOVED THE FOLLOWING:**

RESOLVED THAT THE FOLLOWING TRANSFER OF APPROPRIATIONS IS APPROVED FOR REFERRAL TO THE BOARD OF FINANCE

FROM:

ACCT NO.	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
10704000-86600	CONTINGENCY	\$5,408

TO:

ACCT NO.	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
10501011-82054	SEWER USE CHARGES	\$5,408

- ** MS. THORNE SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENTS:

- ** MR. HARREL MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENTS:**

- 1. KAREN BRENNAN (R) AS A MEMBER OF THE YOUTH COMMISSION, FOR A TERM EXPIRING ON 3/31/07**

2. **GEOFF BALL (R) AS A MEMBER OF THE YOUTH COMMISSION,
FOR A TERM EXPIRING ON 3/31/07**
3. **DOUG MILNE (R) AS A MEMBER OF THE PARKS & RECREATION
COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING ON 3/31/07**

**** MS. THORNE SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING REAPPOINTMENTS

1. **POLICE COMMISSION – DOUG CAMPBELL (R) FOR A TERM
EXPIRING ON 6/30/07 – *this reappointment was tabled***

**** MS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING
REAPPOINTMENT**

2. **SHIRLEY NICHOLS FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO SWRPA FOR A
TERM BEGINNING ON JANUARY 1, 2005 AND ENDING ON
DECEMBER 31, 2006**

**** DR. MICELI SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. HARREL MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD THE
FOLLOWING ITEM TO THE AGENDA**
**** DR. MICELI SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

DARIEN FIRE DEPARTMENT

A request was made for an emergency appropriation to purchase a new Hurst power unit to replace the one that is almost 20 years old.

**RESOLVED THAT THE FOLLOWING TRANSFER OF APPROPRIATIONS IS
APPROVED FOR REFERRAL TO THE BOARD OF FINANCE**

FROM:

ACCT. NO.	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
10704000-86600	CONTINGENCY	\$7,740
30111014-49100	TRANSFER IN GF	\$7,740
TOTAL		\$15,480

TO:

ACCT. NO.	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
10821000-87875	TRANSFER TO RFCNRE	\$7,740
30333415-905014	HURST POWER UNIT	\$7,740
TOTAL		\$15,480

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

The next meeting will take place on November 29, 2004 at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURN

**** MS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** MR. HARREL SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting was adjourned at 10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services